already chosen six representatives from among themselves to sit with the officers of the Government in committee for discussing and settling the draft budget for the year 1097.

32. Popular Assembly.—It was my privilege to inform the Legislative Council on the first occasion that the question was raised after I took charge that it was the intention of the Government to revise the rules relating to the Assembly. This revision will, I assure you, be undertaken as early as practicable. It will thus be seen that it has ever been the earnest aim of His Highness the Maha Raja, whose accession to the *masnad* synchronised with the origin of popular government in this country, to train his subjects in the arts of civics and politics and to enable them to exert a continually growing influence over the administration of the State.

33. Social Progress.—It is a source of sincere gratification to me to note that the different classes and communities inhabiting this State are fully alive to the importance of remedying their social defects and effecting such improvements in their customary laws as are conducive to their social well-being. Government have always given practical proof of their readiness to help the people in their efforts at self-amelioration. In conformity with the avowed policy of the Government in this respect, leave has been granted for the introduction of a private Bill in the Legislative Council to effect further improvements in the law regulating marriage and inheritance among Nayars, while another Bill calculated to remove similar disabilities among Ezhavas, introduced in the Council as a governmental measure, has been referred to a Select Committee. Government have also appointed a Committee to examine the customary law relating to marriage and inheritance among Nanjanad Vellalas, and suggest the necessary improvements in the form of a draft Bill.

34. Other Measures.—The Additional Head Sirkar Vakil will soon introduce a Bill to amend the Jenmi and Kudiyan Regulation. With the object of giving the educated public a share in the administration of criminal justice, as has already been done in the case of civil justice, a Bill has recently been introduced in the Council to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, for taking power to establish benches of Magistrates for the summary trial of minor offences. It is hoped that these benches will afford substantial relief to the stipendiary Magistrates and enable the Government to reduce their number. In the same spirit, the pecuniary and territorial jurisdiction of some of the civil benches, commonly known as the Village Panchayat Courts, has been recently enhanced, and Government hope to establish more civil benches as time goes on.

35. The Depressed Classes.—While speaking at such length on the duties of Government and the privileges of the people, it is only fitting that I should strike a note of advice in regard to the responsibilities of the more fortunate classes of the people of the State towards their less favoured brethren known by the common name of 'the Depressed Classes.' The gradual amelioration of the lot of these classes has been a prominent plank on the platform of all progressive Governments, and Travancore has never been an exception to this rule. To the several invaluable concessions, educational and otherwise, that have been made by Government in the past in favour of these unfortunate communities, it has been my privilege to add a few more, in regard to the assignment of land, the construction of roads, and the sinking of fresh-water wells, while you will note that it is mainly in view to the protection of these communities that the Land Assignment Bill has been brought forward in the Legislative Council. It behoves every one in the State, high and low, to remember that these backward communities form a great national asset, as on them depends to a very large extent the production of food-grains and other articles that constitute the wealth of the country, and it is my most solemn appeal to all to omit no means in their power to improve the lot of these communities. May I, in the same strain of friendly frankness, advise all those who labour under civic disabilities and differences, not to be swayed by hatred or passion towards those who do not suffer from similar disabilities, but to view the situation in a spirit of calmness and confidence, remembering that many of the social differences that we see around us have

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